

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /066 W
-----130238Z 040636 /66

R 121713Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1554
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PLOS MO AG TU LI
SUBJECT: VISIT OF TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI TO MOROCCO

1. TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HABIB CHATTI ARRIVED RABAT FROM ALGIERS APRIL 8 BEARING A "PERSONAL MESSAGE" FROM TUNISIAN PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA FOR KING HASSAN II. AFTER A TWO-HOUR SESSION WITH FONMIN AHMED LARAKI, CHATTI TOLD THE PRESS CORPS THAT DISCUSSIONS WERE DEVOTED TO A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES INCLUDING EXAMINATION OF WAY TO REINFORCE BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS AND A SURVEY OF ISSUES AFFECTING THE "GREATER ARAB MAGHREB, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ZAIRE." AT APRIL 9 AUDIENCE WITH KING HASSAN IN MARRAKECH, CHATTI RAISED QUESTION OF THE SITUATION CONFRONTING TUNISIA IN "ADJACENT AREAS," AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE ONGOING DISPUTE BETWEEN LIBYA AND TUNISIA OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. A WELL-INFORMED MOROCCAN JOURNALIST TOLD EMBOFF THAT CHATTI ALSO ATTEMPTED TO ENLIST GOM SUPPORT IN FAVOR OF THE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT, AND TO BACK THE CALL FOR MOVING THE OAU SEAT FROM ADDIS. SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS REPORTED THAT TUNISIA AND MOROCCO HELD "COMPLETELY IDENTICAL VIEWS" ON
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SITUATION IN ZAIRE.

2. OPPOSITION PRESS, TYPICAL OF WHICH WAS ISTIQLAL DAILY L'OPINION, GAVE CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE TO CHATTI VISIT AND LABELED IT AS NEW INITIATIVE IN MEDIATING ALGERIAN- MOROCCAN DISPUTE IN WESTERN SAHARA. OPPOSITION WELCOMED THIS "NEW INITIATIVE" FROM FRIENDLY STATE AND HOPED FOR AN EARLY END TO EXISTING DIFFERENCES

WITH ALGERIA BUT CAUTIONED THAT PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO PEACE WAS ALGERIAN UNWILLINGNESS TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE QUESTION OF MOROCCAN SOVEREIGNTY IN THE SAHARA WAS A CLOSED CASE.

3. WHILE THERE IS SPECULATION IN THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY THAT TUNISIA MAY HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING TO PLAY THE ROLE OF MEDIATOR IN THE SAHARA DISPUTE WE HAVE NO HARD EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST GOT UNDERTOOK ANY SERIOUS EFFORTS TO THIS END AND TEND TO DOUBT IT. A SAUDI DIPLOMAT IN RABAT PRIVATELY DENIED THAT TUNISIA ASSUMED ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEDIATION AND REPORTED THAT THE CHATTI VISIT WAS CONCERNED SOLELY WITH TUNISIAN/LIBYAN DIFFERENCES OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. AS TO ANY TUNISIAN ROLE ON THE REPORTED MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN BORDER CLASH (RABAT 1942), WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING NEW.
ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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